

JORDAN RIVER BRIDGE

Constructed: 1914

Address: 9600 North 7700 West

Present Owner: Utah County

Historically the Jordan River---or *piya ogwap* (Big Water), as termed by local Indians--has played an important role in the development of Lehi. A natural boundary which prevented the wandering of wayward stock, the river was also a formidable obstacle to citizens traveling westward to obtain wood from Webb's Cedars, West Canyon and Pole Canyon. The first bridge to cross the Jordan River in the Lehi area was constructed just south of present Highway 73. Several bridges stood on this site before the last one was removed during the Army Corps of Engineers' dredging project in 1985.

Fortunately another nearly identical bridge built in 1914, still spans the Jordan River at Fifteenth North (county coordinate 9600 North and 7700 West), or "Colledge Road," as it was then called.

A \$4,380 contract for the bridge was let to the Midland Bridge Company in September 1914. After a seesaw battle between locals who wanted the bridge built farther north--due west from Lehi Junction--and the county commissioners who would not authorize an extra \$2,000 for re-design, the structure was built where it now is.

For decades locals who frequently drive across the bridge have unsuccessfully attempted to get the Utah Department of Transportation (UDOT), which owns the bridge, to replace it with a safer structure. Fortunately for the historically-minded, the bridge was not removed during the 1985-86 Jordan River dredging project. This seventy-nine-year-old structure, eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, is one of the five Pratt pony-truss bridges that remain standing in Utah.

An accommodation between safety and historical interests was recently reached when UDOT agreed to bypass the 1914 bridge with a new structure. The old bridge has been given to Utah County which closed it to motorized traffic. It

is now maintained for pedestrians and cyclists as part of the Jordan River Parkway. Rehabilitation of the bridge in 1997 was coordinated through the Utah State preservation office to ensure that its historic features remain intact.